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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KCFE](#) [PARM](#) [NATO](#) [RU](#) [FR](#)
SUBJECT: FRANCE SHARES U.S. VIEWS ON CFE AND PUTIN'S APRIL
26 REMARKS

REF: STATE 57275

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Josiah Rosenblatt, Reason 1
.4 B/D

¶1. (C) On April 30th, we raised reftel demarche on Russia and its CFE obligations with Arnaud Roux, MFA action officer responsible for CFE. Roux observed that France shared our concern with respect to Russian intentions, especially if Russia is looking to abandon its commitment to the CFE regime. The nature of the Russian threat is unclear, Roux added, as it might include Russian actions against CFE inspection team visits, data exchanges, or a break in Russian participation in the Joint Consultative Group (JCG) in Vienna. Additionally, it's also unclear to France whether Russian threats pertain to future actions or are subject to more immediate implementation. Roux noted that the Russians have asked for a meeting with the MFA on May 2, which he hopes will serve to clarify Russian thinking. (Note: Roux agreed to share with us his readout of the meeting.)

¶2. (C) Roux further agreed with us that the Russians are wrong to seek a linkage between CFE and MD discussions at NATO or to imply that NATO is not fulfilling its obligations under CFE. France also does not believe that temporary U.S. troop deployments under our bilateral basing agreements with Romania and Bulgaria exceed CFE ceilings, he added. In response to our query, Roux emphasized that France intends to maintain Allied solidarity on this issue and looks forward to consultations in the Quad and at the HLTF. France is concerned that Russian actions on CFE could potentially lead to further Russian actions against Open Skies and CSBM of ¶1999.

¶3. (U) Separately, on April 27, in response to a press query about Mr. Lavrov's statements about Russia's moratorium on the CFE treaty, the MFA press spokesperson made the following point:

Informal translation of MFA-provided text

The Russian authorities have raised the possibility of a moratorium on Russia's application of the treaty, while calling on NATO to hold discussions in the NATO-Russia Council. The Russian authorities are considering the possibility of withdrawing Russia from its obligations under the treaty.

For France and its allies, the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe is a cornerstone of security in Europe. It constitutes in particular a unique legal and political framework for organizing security on our continent.

We shall naturally continue to discuss questions relating to the CFE treaty and the agreement on adaptation in the NATO/Russia Council. We shall also continue to discuss in

this same framework American projects for missile defense against the ballistic missile threat from the Middle East. We hope this dialogue will dispel the misunderstandings and that Russia will reverse the announcement it made yesterday.

End text

¶4. (U) In a follow-up question on missile defense, the spokesperson stated that "these are different issues. There is the CFE treaty, which deals with conventional forces, and the missile defense system. On our side we make no link between these two questions. It's the Russians who tend to establish a link."

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